Helda Heorge Will

Selected Longer Poems

By the same author

Ommateum
Expressions of Sea Level
Corsons Inlet
Tape for the Turn of the Year
Northfield Poems
Selected Poems

Uplands

Briefings
Collected Poems: 1951–1971

(winner of the National Book Award for Poetry, 1973)

Sphere: The Form of a Motion

(winner of the 1973-1974 Bollingen Prize in Poetry)

Diversifications

The Snow Poems

Highgate Road

The Selected Poems: 1951–1977

A. R. Ammons

Selected Longer Poems

W·W·NORTON & COMPANY NEW YORK·LONDON

Acknowledgments

A list of all my longer poems, arranged chronologically, would read as follows:

Tape for the Turn of the Year (published separately)

Pray Without Ceasing

Summer Session

Essay on Poetics

Extremes and Moderations
Hibernaculum

Sphere, the Form of a Motion (published separately)

Summer Place (The Hudson Review, Summer 1977)

The Snow Poems (published separately).

I am grateful to Jerald Bullis who suggested that a book such as this should be made available to go with *The Selected Poems* 1951–1977 which contains shorter poems.

with all my love to my son John

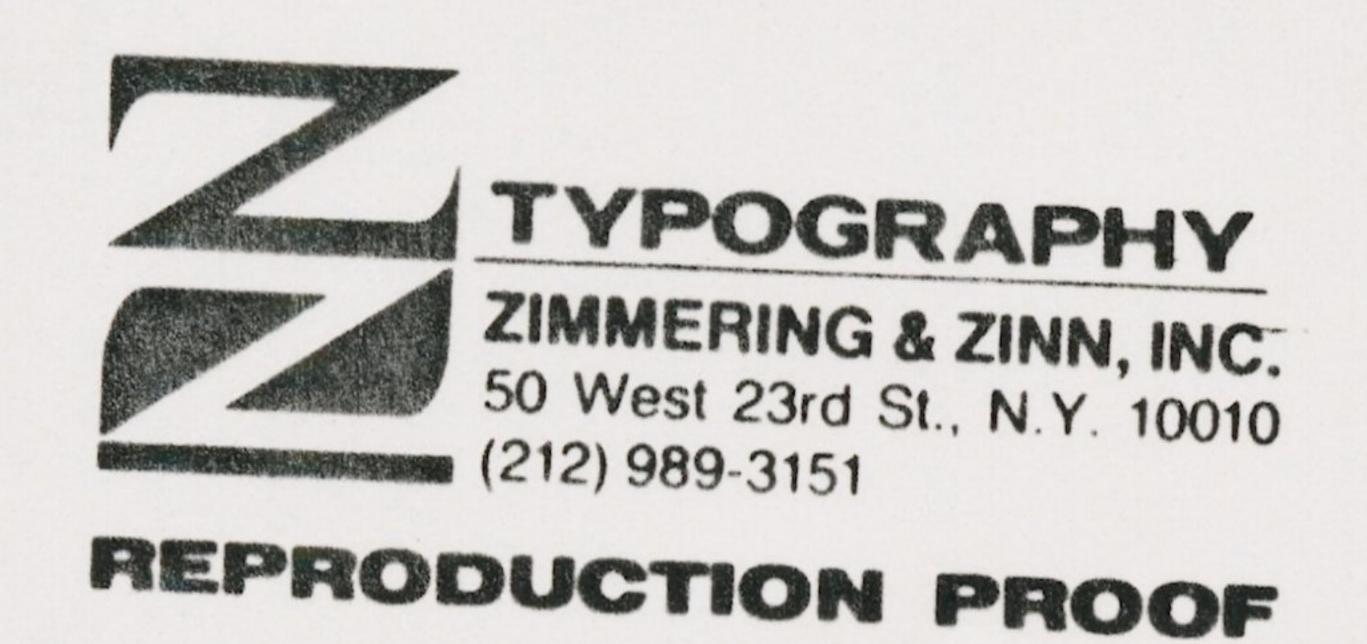
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Summer Session
Essay on Poetics
Extremes and Moderations
Hibernaculum

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Pray Without Ceasing Summer Session Essay on Poetics Extremes and Moderations Hibernaculum

Pray Without Ceasing

I hear the low falling from the highlands of hog-pasture, a music of spheres, a couple: whatever is

done is to be undone: call me down from the high places: I have achieved much of the difficulty of my translation:

stock in trade
gunstock
stockings
stocks & bonds & good
stock
put no stock in that
a stock case
in stock
stock the soup

3, the mystical figure, comes through: the alternating, suspended, opposing spheres undirected and the directed unity, reconciler and putter to sleep—milt on the levees of rationality:

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and in sleep, as in a natural sleep, prone, face turned as if into breath, he had about him needments, bottles of rare glass, bowls: we wrapped him in reed mat, rose from decomposing, generating waters, went up on the plateau and put him in sand: hereafter has not changed since for him: but his head's magnificence and funny-stuff, those epicycles of motion, rituals of turning, dancing, the wind has taken, nothing changed into grass: all the way out of the rise and fall:

"O Aegypte,

which thy children's children

stones that tell of thy piety."

will survive but tales

will not believe;

nought

Aegypte, of thy religious rites nought

will survive but words graven upon

(Trismegistus)

O Egypt I sometimes hear the future of the universe speaking in a moonwheel's turning of sand and light:

we set out a withe of silver grass and it remains: it has interfered with the natural wind, fractured the paralleleity of moonbeams and disturbed lesser sandstorms: mimicry so often far more succeeds:

you heal back from napalm: the flame-scars pull chin to chest, the fingers stick: the mercy of sand's scarless:

when the sand roars, a lion rouses in the center, his eyes, as if in a hollow, headless: recognition is the fiercest imperative:

a pararox, couple achers: the real estate of the imagination:

whatever is—
terror, pity, grief, death,
rising—a child sits in explosion's
clutter, homeless, his small
driftwood legs, his eyes inventing
an equal rage & dark, white smears
of burn
the mask
his face must fit:
whatever is, brutality, the inner siege,
the mind orange, blue with
desolation's mold, something
thin & high
cuts through whatever is
and makes no difference of difference:

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Z75984x02 NORTON a29
SELECTED LONGER POEMS
PROOF TWO 6-12-79 k1-es c-es

my mouth, become eyes, weeps words: words spill into hyacinths: for my acquaintance with grief is intimate, lost voices my credentials: singing's been sung: the same body is crying:

fatigues snagged by wire, bodies sag in their buttons, collars flutter, surf jogs, the wind all outside and usual: blue dusk fills up under the gold smoke: the sky violates nothing to intercede:

I held her by the rose and intruded: the petals slickened, silken: I shaved my head & offered it there: O rose the microflora along your hinder walls are fast bloomers: tunnel-scapes beady with stiff moss: who keeps the saltsea keeps its plankton, not reasonable? microflora, reproducing, don't mind the long glider that coming shoulders out the wind to fundamental suction: collapsible llive with spherical walls: everyway I look leaning in, leaning in's the style & passing over: I pick pockets of perse pansies, poesies, posepays, powder palls & wary:

I had a little pony:
his name was Dapple Gray:
and every time I had him,
he tried to get away:

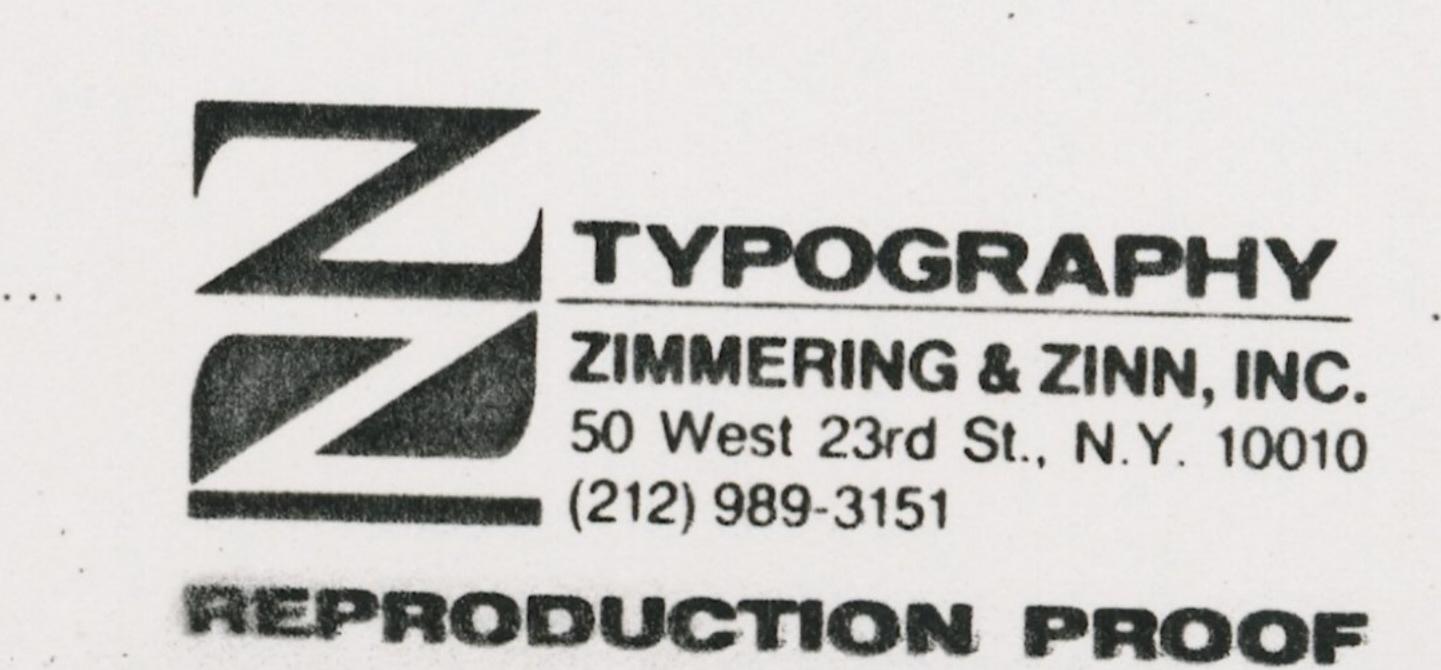
who will eat from such a garden let him have an oedipal situation and my rights and privileges:

that the triadic Hegel could have been evidencing his genitals is a notion of such cracking solemnity birds fail to fly:

some are spring harvests: today, April Fools', a squirrel in the leafless elm gathered torn bark and inner tissue from dead branches, wadding them into her mouth then going limb by thinning limb to leap onto the heavy electric wire, then going upstreet to my neighbor's streetside spruce: I think that's where the nest will be: waste assimilated into use: the result a neatness unpremeditated, a re-ingestion of process: so arranged it is that my wasted life becomes words that through complexity and unstructured swirl seek the fall-out of comparable enhancements:

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SELECTED LONGER POEMS
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occurrences recognitions surroundings

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tensions sprung free into event

happenstance & necessity prediction & surprise moment & forever

and the gloomy, oh the melancholy, remorseful falling back and away of time-sunk persons and places, ragged knots of a grounded, celestial kite:

yesterday robins
on the dark edge of dusk sang like
peepers:
I went out to listen
and they were robins:

and on the cold edge of spring though on a warm day we went out into the woods for hepaticas up along Six Mile Creek: we found one spring-beauty and by sun-warmed logs a few clusters of hepatica, hundreds of plants but few bloomers: the backfall of creekwater was interesting, countercaps, and compensating, the up-creek water along eddying banks:

peripheries:
the dance about the fire,
utterance of tongues,
parlance of feet:
griefs can't be removed,
only altered, caught up into the
timed motions
of bearable sway:

fall in love with yourself where it's shallow: don't thwart shriveling up by suddenly drowning:

if change is certain, as say so many, certainty is where there isn't any:

pop gun
soda pop
pop art
popsicle
mom & pop
popinjay
pop in
popeyed
population

I can't get that star carted I said: flooded carburetor, cracked voltage regulator: I didn't realize at once it was apt: a Starchief: and one day a man said looking at the dash word, it has your name in it: Starchief: he was a good abstractor:

I had a little pony:
his name was Dapple Gray:
and when I tried to trim him,
he had a lot to bray:

an inch of snow last night but mid morning is bright and melting: the shadows are white:

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SELECTED LONGER POEMS
PROOF TWO 6-12-79 k1-es c-es

napalm isn't falling here: so what is it:

first, an explosion near the ground: then a tarry rain, soft and afire, falls, crumbles, & sticks: sticks to trees, houses, children, things like that: if it hits it's 94.3% effective:

I see my death, my horror, the radical, real, senseless pain, as a coming afloat, rocking in a mastery of oceans: what time caricatures should time keep: to those busy making themselves great, with grave music and solemn looks, a thorough using up and setting forth of language's materials, Isend empty statements, slip-shoddiness, incredible breeziness and such: the wind we go to understands everything: I sing, though, in a way, the best I can, for I may be understood where I do not understand:

around the aureola matters get touchy:

confusion erodes the ice-glass steel offices buildings of rationality: anti-rationality only makes another kind of thrust: complexity blurs the sleek towers, wilts the phallus of mistaken direction:

welcome to your unattended, coin-operated, do-it-yourself laundry: bring and use your favorite bleach, soap, and starch: if machine is defective, please use another machine: to start washer put money in coin meter and (1) if slide type meter—slowly push slide all the way in: then slowly pull slide all the way out: (2) if rotary knob type meter turn knob: will start filling not later than 1/2 minute after operating coin slide:

stopcock
cock & bull
ears cocked
cocktail
peacock
cockle
cockney
cockiness
cockscomb
poppycock
cockeyed
cockroach
cockpit
cocksure

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SELECTED LONGER POEMS
PROOF TWO 6-12-79 k1-es c-es

dryclean wash 'n wears, even cotton items: use this handy clothing guide: follow these simple steps: brush away loose lint and other soiling matter: turn sweaters inside out: turn down cuffs of trousers: insert the necessary coins:

rubbers, after several drycleanings, tend to lose elasticity: plastic-coated fabrics often become stiff. beware sequins, beads, and other fragile ornaments, can get you into trouble:

remove wear wrinkles and sharpen creases and pleats: some spots refuse to come out, rust, mildew, dried paint, indelible ink:

little artery, couple inches long, branching into cardiac muscle: it pops and you give up philosophy and ultimate concern, car payments, son and wife, you give up the majors & minors, the way you like your egg cooked, your class ring, lawn, sparrows nesting in the garage, the four crocus bulbs (maybe more next year), toenails and fillings:

I wouldn't want to happen up on any critters of eternity, absolutes that end the world: fellow said one star up there in our galaxy is mostly gadolinium, a rare earth; nobody knows how the concentration occurred: then there are other surpluses and scarcities that uneven the tissue:

I wouldn't want anything to get known tight: ignorance is our boat giving us motion: or, capsized, knowledge is our ark which is more in line with the tradition:

the ocean would then be what it is:

10/12 Janson w/Italic no track & no kern

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SELECTED LONGER POEMS
PROOF TWO 6-12-79 k1-es c-es

REPRODUCTION PROOF

spirit, though
it encompasseth mightiness, etc., however,
cannot, like a motor,
raise and lower
toast:

nothing matters, believe me, except
everything: to sift & sort, magnify
& diminish, admit & renounce, impairs
the event:
what the mind can't accept's obscene:
the rest shines with an
additional, redeeming
light,
the light in the head
of language in motion:

the wave coming in, running, gathers, lofts, curls—the instant of motion's maximum organization: then: then one is forty & hollow: the curl's reach redeems the hollow, equals it, till the curl touches over: what is the use: the crashing, the hollow coming topside into wide prevalence, the flat waters skinnying out and rushing back—is merely endurance until the next wave lifts: as for what's left, dip it and ship it: to have made it here is not to have it made:

entering is lovely: such delicacies, scents, the feminine source, perfumes: cookies in the oven, delights:

mixmaster, mixmaster,
mast me a mix, ur,
mix me a mist, ur...
the mixers and blenders chew up
differences: chomp & whirl
to knotless paste: the spurt for
equilibrium:
to compensate for which somewhere root,
bark, leaf must make a walnut, some
skinny saint rail through the cosmos,
shot from earth by penury and dread:
what is more costly or
needed than a mind shot to space by
shiny thrust, a renunciation of
earth, a negative blast away:

I have seen all the way in with a white bang that they are spheres, round solids, sprinkled, lightly, in a medium, not empty, called space and that these round bodies go round different orders of center that swoosh away burning their peripheries and sucking their centers through virgin space, neither up nor down-the terror that that is the way it is, that particular way, a pure flower of terror:

Galley 10 Z75984x04 NORTON a29 SELECTED LONGER POEMS PROOF TWO 6-12-79 k1-es c-es ancient souls sitting on
the bright banks of forever
in
raptures of old acquaintance: for every
never again,
an always again: and young souls
from their quick missing
quick as branches and glittering:
where the lost remains, immortal in
the foreverness of the lost:
say good morning, say buon giorno,
say hi
to infant brother, to mother, father,
sit down under the golden pines on
the slopes of no further parting:

the Buddhist nun burns for the peace her ashes will achieve:

the village woman coming home finds her shack afire, her son & husband shot: she bends down where she is: she is given tokens of the dead but her left arm like a sickle reaps at the air for the harvest already taken:

through the reeds somewhere, as by a paddy or ditch in her head, wind burrs a leaf: the woman flutters, her grief absolute and not a mystery:

how can I know I
am not
trying to know my way into feeling
as

feeling
tries to feel its way into knowing:
it's
indifferent what I say: the motions
by which
I move
manifest
merely a deeper congruence
where the structures are:

run my poem through your life and exist, decommissioned, like rubble, innocent, slouchy on the uptake:

the scramblers, grabbers, builders—rubblerousers: sticking stone to false stone in a unity of walls which wants to come apart: let weeds and grasses move in among a scattering, make a little shade, hide mice, give burrows to ground bees, byway hideouts to the engines of spiders, stones the owl can come and sit in moonlight on: we should all be in a shambles, shacked up, peeping round the grasshoppers, preserving a respectful quiet:

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SELECTED LONGER POEMS
PROOF TWO 6-12-79 k1-es c-es

don't snatch & grab: grab snatch: laboratory tests attest, when a system of two bodies charges and discharges itself it's peaceful as tulips:

can a 41-year-old man living on dandelion leaves from the cool edges of junkyards find songlore enough in the holocausts, boggy garbage, fly swarms, lamb bones, and rust-floral cans of his weedy search to sustain interest:

the continuum, one and visionless, within which the breakdown of pure forms, arising of skyscrapers, laws, the high crystal-clear arising of theory:

the evening blue-purple, the trees black, the birds can't quit singing: damp heat built and rose through the golden towered afternoon,

broke finally into motion, as of descent, rain beating straight down between racks of thunder:

can anything be erased: can this day's praising hold to the day it praises down the slopes of total entropy:

pray without ceasing:

we found hailstones in the grass and ate them to cool: spurred stones with interior milkwhite halos, an arrested spangling: the high hard water melted aching our tongues.

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SELECTED LONGER POEMS
PROOF TWO 6-12-79 k1-es c-es

WHITE 6-7-79

